

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (cancelled)

Claim 2 (currently amended): A data management system, comprising:  
a processor residing in a first application module; and  
first and second data ports in said first application module, wherein said first data port is adaptable to connect said first application module to a controller module and said second data port is adaptable to connect a second application module to said controller module;

wherein said processor ~~is programmed~~ determines whether said controller module is connected to said first application module by transmitting a first controller handshake signal through said first data port, and while inhibiting data pass-through at said second data port in connection with said first controller handshake signal transmission; and  
wherein, if said first handshake signal does not result in communication with said controller module at said first port, said processor determines whether said controller module is connected to said second application module by transmitting a second controller handshake signal through said second data port to establish communication with a said controller module if said first handshake signal does not result in communication with a controller, and while inhibiting data pass-through at said first data port in connection with said second controller handshake signal transmission.

Claim 3 (original): The system of claim 2, further comprising:  
a data hub that includes said first and second ports.

Claim 4 (original): The system of claim 3, wherein said data hub comprises at least one switch connectable to alternately inhibit data pass-through at said first and second ports.

Claim 5 (original): The system of claim 2, wherein said processor and said first and second ports are housed in an application module.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The system of claim 2, further comprising:  
a controller module in communication with said processor through said first port.

Claim 7 (original): The system of claim 6, further comprising:  
an application module in communication with said processor through said second port.

Claim 8 (original): The system of claim 7, further comprising: a plurality of memories detachably connected to said controller module.

Claim 9 (original): The system of claim 6, wherein said processor is programmed to transmit an ID request to said controller module.

Claim 10 (original): The system of claim 9, wherein said controller module is programmed to transmit an application ID to said processor in response to said ID request.

Claim 11 (original): The system of claim 10, wherein said controller module is programmed to append said application ID onto other data transmitted to said processor.

Claim 12 (cancelled).

Claim 13 (currently amended): A method for coordinating data flow,  
comprising:

providing a processor in a first application module;

providing first and second data ports in said first application module, wherein said first data port is adaptable to connect said first application module to a controller module and said second data port is adaptable to connect a second application module to said controller module;

determining whether said controller module is connected to said first application module by transmitting a first handshake signal from a said processor through a

~~first data port to test for the presence of a controller at said first port; and while~~ inhibiting data pass-through at a second data port ~~during said first handshake signal transmission;~~

if said first handshake signal does not result in communication with said controller module at said first port, determining whether said controller module is connected to said second application module by transmitting a second handshake signal from said processor through said second data port ~~to test for the presence of a controller at said second data port if said first handshake signal does not result in communication with a controller at said first port; and while~~ inhibiting data pass-through at said first data port ~~during the transmission of said second handshake signal.~~

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 13, wherein said inhibiting of data pass-through at said first and second ports further comprises switching at least one switch in a hub that comprises said first and second ports.

Claim 15 (original): The method of claim 13, further comprising:  
transmitting an ID request from said processor to a controller found to be present at one of said ports.

Claim 16 (original): The method of claim 15, further comprising:  
transmitting an application ID to said processor from said controller in response to said ID request.

Claim 17 (original): The method of claim 16, further comprising:  
appending said application ID onto data retrieved by said controller module from a memory.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A data management system, comprising:  
a plurality of first and second data ports coupled to a processor, wherein said first data port is adaptable to connect said first application module to a controller module and said second data port is adaptable to connect a second application module to said controller module;  
an first application module housing said processor and said first and second data ports;

wherein said processor ~~is programmed to~~ determines whether said controller module is connected to said first application module and said second application module by transmitting respective controller handshake signals to test for the presence of a controller alternately through each of said plurality of said first and second data ports while inhibiting data pass-through at the respective other data port.

Claim 19 (original): The data management system of claim 18, further comprising:  
a data hub that comprises said plurality of data ports.

Claim 20 (original): The data management system of claim 18, further comprising:  
a controller in communication with said processor through one of said plurality of data ports.

Claim 21 (original): The data management system of claim 20, wherein said controller is further programmed to send an application ID to said processor in response to receiving a transmission from said processor.

Claim 22 (currently amended): A system configuration method, comprising:  
providing a processor in a first application module;  
providing first and second ports in said first application module, wherein said first port is adaptable to connect said first application module to a controller module and said second port is adaptable to connect a second application module to said controller module;  
determining whether a controller module is connected to said first application module by transmitting a first handshake signal from said processor testing for the presence of a controller through a said first port while inhibiting data pass-through at said second port using a processor; and  
if said first handshake signal does not result in communication with said controller module at said first port, determining whether said controller module is connected to said second application module by transmitting a second handshake signal from said processor testing for the presence of said controller using said processor through a said second port while inhibiting data pass-through at said first data port if said controller is not found through said first port.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method of claim 22, further comprising:

sending an ID request to said controller.

Claim 24 (original): The method of claim 23, further comprising:  
sending an application ID to said processor from said controller;  
wherein said application ID represents an electronic address for said  
processor.

Claim 25 (original): The method of claim 22, further comprising:  
inhibiting data pass-through at said second port while testing through said first  
port.

Claim 26 (original): The method of claim 22,  
sending an acknowledgement from said controller to said processor.

Claim 27 (new): The system of claim 2, wherein said second application module  
is connected serially with said controller module and said processor residing in said first  
application module.